

EXHIBIT 12

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Departure Lounge

It seems like ages ago, but if you remember, the state Budget negotiations this past March had some high drama the final week.

Under unusual pressure to meet the April 1 deadline early due to upcoming religious holidays, the budget process hit an eleventh-hour snag. It started in Gov. Andrew Cuomo's office on that Monday night when state Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan accused Cuomo of "not negotiating in good faith." Cuomo apparently lost it. Began screaming and yelling. Pounding the table. The budget had officially come apart. All tables were cancelled.

But if we understand the Albany process at all, we know that breakups are inevitable. And it makes putting Humpty Dumpty back together again all that much sweeter. By the end of the week, things were moving again. Staten Island Sen. Andrew Lanza was doing a lot of the negotiating for the Senate Republicans.

But soon there was a new holdup. See if you can take a wild guess...Hint: his name rhymes with "Kimka Relder." Yes! Sen. Simcha Felder, the Brooklyn Democrat who caucuses with Republicans, wanted something. Felder represents the magic 32nd vote, giving Republicans their working majority. So much like EF Hutton, when Felder talks, people listen.

In this particular case, Felder wanted changes to state Education Department standards for Yeshivas. It had absolutely nothing to do with the budget. But it was a very important issue to the Jewish community in Borough Park, which Felder represents. In fact, for the last 20 years, the Orthodox and Hasidic communities have been the fastest growing ethnic group in New York City. Very often, they vote in a bloc, meaning they are a force to be reckoned with for any politician seeking statewide or citywide office.

Enter David Lobl. You may not have heard the guy, but if you've been anywhere near Cuomo the last six years, you've definitely seen him. Lobl has been a fixture in the Cuomo administration since 2012, but last month was his last day on the job as he leaves to take a new position with uber-lobbyist Suri Kasirer. Lobl handled much of Cuomo's outreach to the Jewish community, and on Thursday, March 30th while at a Cubs-Marlins game in Miami with his family, Lobl received a call from the governor.

The pitch was simple: Cuomo needed Lobl's help moving Felder, who was holding up the entire budget from being put to bed. Lobl took cover behind the stands of Marlins Park, and while trying to drown out the din of cheering fans, he and the governor devised a strategy.

Once they hashed it out, Lobl went back to his in-laws' house in Boca Raton, where he was staying. At about 11:30 that night, He gets a call from the Grand Rebbe in Kiryas Joel. The Rebbe wanted a conference call with the governor, and Cuomo quickly agreed. David explained to Cuomo that initially, he and the Rebbe would speak in Yiddish, much like at that Bronx dinner in Godfather where Virgil Solazzo informs the Police Captain that he and Michael Corleone were about to speak in Italian ("Have the veal. It's the best in the City").

The call went off without a hitch. Although Lobl had to drive to a nearby 7-11 in Boca at 1 a.m. to take it, so as not to wake up his entire house. But the deal was struck. Bill language was agreed to, and they seemed to have the makings of a final agreement that would pull the budget back together once and for all. Elated, Lobl called Cuomo back for a wrap-up at which point Cuomo said: "David, I don't speak the language, but I'm pretty sure I heard you and the Rebbe use some Yiddish curse words."

Lobl was also instrumental in setting up all of Cuomo's trips to Israel...OK, so there have only been two during his tenure as governor, but there were at least two others that got cancelled at the last minute.

That includes September 2016, when Cuomo was supposed to travel to the Jewish State for the funeral of Shimon Peres. On the day he was supposed to leave, a New Jersey Transit train had a fatal crash as it approached the Hoboken Station. Cuomo raced to New Jersey to appear alongside then New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie for updates on the situation.

Lobl was already on the ground in Israel when he received word that Cuomo would not be coming. Nevertheless, he was seated in the VIP section for the funeral and ushered into the receiving tent immediately thereafter.

At that point David found himself in a small tent with the Israeli Prime Minister and his wife, former President Bill Clinton, Francois Hollande, Mahmoud Abbas and Prince Charles, of all people.

David was eager to say hello to the Royal Prince who surprised him when he asked in his signature upper crust British accent, "Is Governor Cuomo here?" They chatted for a bit, and at the lull in the conversation, Prince Charles cut to the real reason he was so eager to talk. He grabbed Lobl by the arm and whispered: "Hey, when do I put my Kippah on?"

The Cuomo Administration has certainly had its fair share of staff turnover. Some departures more eventful than others. But there is also a core of survivors within the inner circle who have committed for the long haul. And for a culture where the unofficial motto could be: "If you don't BELONG, please don't BE LONG," David Lobl is definitely deserving of recognition for his time on the inside. We wish him well.

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